

Kalashnikovs & Calculators

Warfare, Administration and State Making: A Case Study of Somalia and Somaliland

STATE FRAGILITY... is one of today's most pressing global public policy challenges ...



... and constitutes a formidable conundrum for the academic community ...



HOW CAN PROCESSES OF STATE MAKING AND BREAKING BE MEANINGFULLY ANALYSED AND UNDERSTOOD?

General consensus:
institutions matter

Crisis States Research Centre (LSE):

The fragility or resilience of states hinges on 'institutional multiplicity'

PROPOSITION I:

State making is about institutional standardization - a process whereby a single set of '**rules of the game**' gains dominance within a territory.

TRUE, the 'rules of the game' matter, **BUT** - this is only half the story !!

State making is not only about institutions, but also **identities**!

There is a need to forge a national identity ...



Members of the same nation share a language

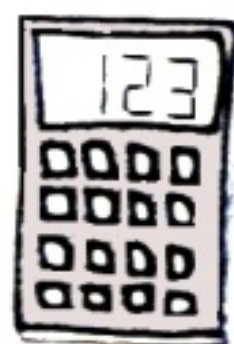
... and other identity markers such as mental maps...

PROPOSITION II:

State making is about socio-cognitive standardization, a process whereby one common set of '**rules of the mind**' gains dominance within a society.

OK, BUT what brings about such institutional and socio-cognitive standardization?

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION



Well accepted argument that central administration importantly influences institutions and identities.

WAR (FARE) ... another global public policy challenge ...



WE NEED TO STOP WAR, AS IT IS DEVELOPMENT IN REVERSE

WAR IS A DEMON OF MORDOR ...



... and another academic conundrum ...



HM... NEW WARS UNMAKE STATES, **BUT** HISTORICALLY WARS HAVE MADE STATES!

WHILE WAR MIGHT NOT NECESSARILY BE AN ANGEL OF ORDER ... WE MIGHT NEED TO GIVE WAR A CHANCE...

Given the ambivalence of war, there is a need to **disentangle** the '**black box of war**'

PROPOSITION III:

War can be constitutive to state making under the condition that it contributes to processes of institutional and socio-cognitive standardization.

SO WHAT?

3 examples:

Understanding **state making** and **state breaking** as processes of changing levels of institutional and socio-cognitive standardization helps in gaining a more nuanced understanding of state trajectories, e.g. in **SOMALIA**.

1) common argument that the unmaking of Somalia started with dictatorial reign of Siad Barre ...

NOT TRUE. Partly due to enhanced administration, the early rule of Siad Barre saw steeply increasing levels of standardization, cum state making.

2) general proposition that war did nothing but contribute to state unmaking in Somalia ...

QUESTIONABLE. The civil war has been constitutive to state making in Somaliland, as it enhanced levels of standardization.

3) frequent postulation that state of Somaliland was built by 'traditional authorities' from the 'bottom up'.

MORE NUANCED VIEW. Major processes of standardization were carried through by 'modern elites' from top down.